

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: June 28, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of July 14, 2021

Subject: Approval of Ramsey County, FTA Pilot Program for TOD Planning (Rush Line) 211001

District(s), Member(s): Districts 11 and 13, Council Members Susan Vento and Chai Lee

Policy/Legal Reference: FM 14-2 Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods and Services, Expenditures for Contracts with Other Governmental Entities; TOD Policy

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Division/Department: Metro Transit – Transit Oriented Development Office

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Intergovernmental Agreement 211001, which is a pass-through Subrecipient Grant Agreement (SGA) with Ramsey County for the \$1,250,000 FTA Pilot Program for a TOD Planning grant award.

Background

As the designated recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the region, Metro Transit/Metropolitan Council often applies for federal funds on behalf of other agencies. In order to pass these funds through to complete the project, Metro Transit/Metropolitan Council must have an executed SGA with a Subrecipient agency, in this case, Ramsey County.

Metro Transit was awarded, through a federal competitive process, a grant for the FTA Pilot Program for TOD Planning in June of 2020. The award is for \$1,250,000 in FTA funding with a 27.7% local match of \$479,321. The Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) has set a 15% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal on this contract.

These grant funds will be used for advanced station area planning and developing implementation strategies along the planned METRO Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor in Ramsey County as described in the grant application.

Rationale

The SGA allows Metro Transit/Metropolitan Council to pass through FTA funds to agencies other than the Council to complete the work identified in the federal award.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The proposed SGA and FTA Pilot Program for TOD Planning funding will advance multiple Thrive Outcomes, including Prosperity, Stewardship, Equity, and Livability. Significant examples for the advancement of each of these Thrive goals include:

- **Prosperity:** The station area planning and community engagement activities pursued with this grant program on the planned METRO Rush Line will set the stage for appropriate community development along the transitway.

The location of jobs, housing, and essential services along the transitway can create a community where needs can be met using transit, thereby reducing transportation costs for the corridor community.

- **Stewardship:** The \$479,321 local match leverages \$1.25M in federal funds and demonstrates the communities' commitments to build on the federal and local BRT investment in the METRO Rush Line. This transit way investment is currently estimated to be between \$457M and \$473M.
- **Equity:** The community engagement efforts as part of the grant will focus explicitly on underserved populations to ensure their perspectives and needs are integrated into the station area plans, implementation strategies and municipal capital improvement programs. A housing gaps analysis will include targets for addition and preservation of affordable housing.
- **Livability:** The grant will advance livability by identifying and programming bicycle and pedestrian connections to the stations. Land use, zoning, and other policy changes that will be recommended and implemented as part of the grant will also work to improve the experience at and around the stations for station area residents and users of all active modes of transportation.

Funding

The grant includes a federal allocation of up to \$1,250,000 and a local match provided by Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority, Ramsey County Public Works, Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, Metropolitan Council (in-kind) and Metro Transit (in-kind) of up to \$479,321. The FTA funding will be passed through from Metro Transit to Ramsey County on a quarterly reimbursement basis for the duration of the grant activity, September 2021 through September 2023.

The FTA funds were amended into the Council's 2021 Unified Budget in Business Item 2021-39 JT, the Carry-Forward amendment approved by the Transportation Committee on February 8, 2021, the Management Committee on February 10th and Council on February 28th, 2021.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this Subrecipient Grant Agreement or the award of the FTA Pilot Planning Grant.